

What is claimed is:

1. A system for providing a game that simulates the trading of commodities comprising:

a computer accessible by a plurality of players over a computer network;

a database accessible by said computer containing a plurality of player

5 files associated with a plurality of players of the system wherein each of said plurality of player files contains a player portfolio associated with a specific player including commodities and units thereof and a money value; said plurality of player files further containing a player score determined by said computer based on said player portfolio;

10 a database accessible by said computer containing a plurality of indications submitted by players of the system to said computer over said computer network, wherein each of said plurality of indications relates to a bid or offer for a specified number of units of a specified commodity at a specified unit price;

15 an indication selected from said plurality of indications submitted by a player to said computer over said computer network; and,

software executing on said computer for receiving said selected indication from the player, retrieving a player portfolio from said player database corresponding to the player, updating said listing of commodities and units thereof in said retrieved player portfolio to reflect said selected indication, 20 updating said money value in said retrieved player portfolio to reflect said selected indication, and removing the selected indication from said indication database.

2. The system of claim 1 further comprising:

a database containing game rules for controlling the game flow and processing of indications, said game rules including scoring criteria and game-ending criteria;

5 software executing on said computer for retrieving said scoring criteria from said game rules database, retrieving said player portfolio, determining a player score based on said player portfolio, storing said determined player score in said player database, retrieving said game-ending criteria from said game rules database, ceasing further game play when said game-ending criteria are
10 met, retrieving player scores from each of said plurality of player files in said player database, and determining a winner based on said retrieved player scores.

3. The system of claim 2 further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving the commodities and units thereof from the player file, determining a current value of the commodities based on a unit price at which
5 each of the commodities was last processed, and determining said player score by adding said determined value to the money value in the player portfolio the sum.

4. The system of claim 2 wherein said game-ending criteria are met upon the expiration of a preset time period.

5. The system of claim 2 wherein said game-ending criteria are met upon one of said plurality of players attaining a predetermined player score.

6. The system of claim 2 wherein each of said players begins the game with an empty player portfolio and said game rules include predetermined limitations on a player's open position in any given commodity.

7. The system of claim 6 wherein said predetermined limitations on a player's open position in any given commodity are effective upon satisfaction of said game-ending criteria.

8. The system of claim 2 wherein each of said players begins the game with predetermined commodities and units thereof available for placing and accepting indications and a predetermined money value player portfolio available for placing and accepting indications.

9. The system of claim 1 further comprising;

a completed bid submission form containing a proposed bid to buy submitted by the player to said computer over said computer network; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting an indication submission form to the player over said computer network, receiving said completed indication submission form submitted by the player, querying said retrieved player portfolio to verify sufficient money value to back said proposed bid, and creating a new indication based on said completed indication submission form, and storing said new indication in said indication database.

10. The system of claim 1 further comprising;

a completed offer submission form containing a proposed offer to sell submitted by the player to said computer over said computer network; and, software executing on said computer for transmitting an indication submission form to the player over said computer network, receiving said completed indication submission form submitted by the player, querying said retrieved player portfolio to verify sufficient units of a commodity specified in said proposed offer to back said proposed offer, and creating a new indication based on said completed indication submission form, and storing said new indication in said indication database.

11. The system of claim 9 or 10, further comprising software executing on said computer for retrieving said game rules from said game rules database, determining whether said new indication violates said games rules, and notifying the player of any determined violations over said computer network.

12. The system of claim 1 further comprising:

a presentation of said plurality of indications transmitted from said computer to the player over said computer network, and,
software executing on said computer for retrieving said plurality of indications from said indication database and transmitting said plurality of indications to the player over said computer network.

13. The system of claim 12 further comprising:

a formatting selection submitted to said computer by the player over said computer network; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of formatting options to the player over said computer network, receiving said formatting selection submitted by the player, and formatting said presentation according to said formatting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to the player.

14. The system of claim 12 further comprising:

a sorting selection submitted to said computer by the player over said computer network; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of sorting options to the player over said computer network, receiving said sorting selection submitted by the player, and sorting said presentation according to said submitted sorting selection prior to transmitting said presentation to the player.

15. The system of claim 12 further comprising:

a content selection submitted to said computer by the player over said computer network; and,

software executing on said computer for transmitting a plurality of content options to the player over said computer network, receiving said content selection submitted by the player, retrieving indications from said indications database corresponding to said submitted content selection, and transmitting said retrieved indications to the player over said computer network.

16. The system of claim 1 further comprising:

a request to register submitted by the player to said computer over said computer network;

software executing on said computer for transmitting a registration form to the player over said computer network link in response to said request.

a completed registration form submitted by the player to said computer over said computer network; and,

software executing on said computer for receiving said completed registration form, creating a player file based on said completed registration form, and storing said player file in said player database.

17. The system of claim 1 wherein said computer network comprises the Internet and said system further comprising software executing on said computer for operating and maintaining a website for facilitating communication between the computer and the player.